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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : H. NAKATSUKA et al. Confirmation No.: 5344
Assignment Division
Appl. No. : 10/024,415
Filed : December 21, 2001 Examiner: C. Tran
For : DRIVE DEVICE AND DRIVE METHOD FOR A COLD CATHODE
FLUORESCENT LAMP

COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

Assistant Commissioner of Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

In response to the Notice of Allowability, mailed by the Patent and Trademark Office on December 18, 2002 and to the Statement of Reasons for Allowance attached thereto, Applicants wish to clarify the record with respect to the basis for the patentability of claims in the present application. In this regard, while Applicants do not disagree with the Examiner's indication that certain identified features are not disclosed by the references, Applicants submit that each of the claims in the present application recite a particular combination of features, and that the basis for patentability of each of these claims is based on the totality of the particular features recited therein.

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Additionally, Applicants wish to clarify the recited features of the present invention identified by the Examiner as not disclosed by the prior art. In this regard, in the Detailed Action attached to the Notice of Allowance, the Examiner stated that "[p]rior art fails to disclose or suggest: (1) a piezoelectric transformer having a pair of primary electrodes and first and secondary electrodes; (2) the first phase from the second secondary electrode opposite the first phase from the first secondary electrode. As required by independent claims 1, 18, 19, 21, 26 and 27".

However, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims of the present invention recite features of an invention that is not fully and properly characterized by the Notice of Allowance. In this regard, claim 1 recites:

"a piezoelectric transformer having a pair of primary electrodes and first and second secondary electrodes,... outputting a secondary output in a first phase from the first secondary electrode and outputting a secondary output in a second phase opposite the first phase from the second secondary electrode" (emphasis added). Additionally, claim 18 and 19 recite features similar to the above-noted features of claim 1.

Additionally, claim 21 recites:

"the piezoelectric transformer having a pair of primary electrodes and first and second secondary electrodes,... outputting a secondary output in a first phase from the first secondary electrode and outputting a secondary output in a second phase opposite the first phase from the second secondary electrode" (emphasis added). Additionally, claims 26 and 27 recite features similar to the above-noted features of claim 19.

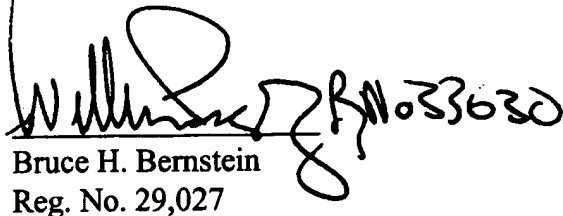
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Thus the Examiner's paraphrasing of the claim language appears to be inaccurate and should not affect the reasons for the allowability of the pending claims.

Accordingly, Applicants wish to clarify the recitations of the independent claims indicated by the Examiner as containing allowable subject matter. Additionally, each of claims 1, 18, 19, 21, 26 and 27 recite additional features of the invention. Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is allowable at least because the prior art does not disclose or suggest the above-noted features of the independent claims, taken alone as indicated by the Examiner, or taken in the claimed combination with other features respectively recited in each independent claim.

Should there be any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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February 6, 2003
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